



Changing WIC Changing Roles

One of our greatest strengths at WIC is our ability to adapt to the ever-changing public health environment. As the nation rallies around obesity prevention, WIC is in a great position to lead this movement. By helping WIC families learn life skills related to eating healthy and being active, we can make a difference. As we shift our efforts, WIC dietitians have the opportunity to reexamine and redefine their role. So, what roles might the RD take on if there was not as much high-risk counseling to do? The *Nutrition Education Committee (NEC)* and the *Nutrition Issues Committee (NIC)* pondered just such a question over the summer. Here are some of their ideas:

Education and Training

- Train, coach, and mentor paraprofessionals
- Develop and revise lesson plans
- Devote time to learner-centered education
- Participate in training workshops

Outreach

- Conduct community assessment
- Conduct outreach to increase participation
- Improve communication and develop partnerships with the medical community and other community agencies
- Participate in coalitions

Program Administration

- Conduct staff observations and performance reviews
- Obtain participant input and feedback
- Foster leadership by providing team building activities
- Develop a Nutrition Services Plan that meets local agency needs
- Apply for grants
- Implement staff wellness activities



People Are Talking...

Here's what one WIC Director had to say on the subject of changing WIC and changing roles:

I had a meeting with two of our RDs this morning, both long time WIC employees. We talked a little about how they would see the role of the RD without all the high-risk counseling. They both would love to spend more time training WNAs on an ongoing basis and developing the group education program.

Anyway, there was no resistance at all to letting go of what they are required to do now. Their eyes were lighting up as they saw the possibility of really getting to do nutrition education in WIC!

Here's what one Nutrition Education Committee member had to say about expanding the RD's role:

In addition to participating in coalitions, WIC is the organization that hires the most RDs and is in a prime position to enhance the nutrition education provided to communities through coalitions. WIC also brings to the table its position of trust and reliability for the community. WIC is a voice that reminds governments and other entities that there is a disenfranchised population to be considered when making decisions for the health and well being of society.



Feedback? Contact us at
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